

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

EMBASSY TEL AVIV 4994

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 10183

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE MEETING ON LEBANON

1. EVENTS IN LEBANON CONTINUE TO BE OF CONSIDERABLE CONCERN TO GOE. EVER SINCE ROUND 4 BEGAN, MFA AND PRESIDENCY HAVE USED THIS CONCERN PUBLICLY AND HAVE URGENTLY COUNSELLED MODERATION. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO BEIRUT HAS BEEN CALLED BACK FOR CONSULATIONS MORE THAN ONCE AND HAS CONDUCTED MEETINGS WITH LEBANESE PROTAGONISTS. LATEST IN SERIES OF DISCUSSIONS WITH GOL WAS FONMIN FAHMY'S MEETING OCT 12 WITH LEBANESE AMBASSADOR SABRI THE SECOND SUCH MEETING IN TWENTY FOUR HOURS. SABRI ALSO MET WITH ARAB LEAGUE SYG RIAD, AFTER WHICH HE TOLD PRESS THAT LEBANESE DEL TO FONMIN CONFERENCE OCT 15 WOULD BE LED BY KARAME OR FONMIN TAQLA.

2. ALTHOUGH EGYPT, WHICH CONSIDERS ITSELF LEADERS OF ARAB WORLD, HAS CONSEQUENT SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR HELPING SOLVE LEBANESE CRISIS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ARAB LEAGUE (AL) CONFERENCE WAS NOT RPT NOT GOE IDEA. FEAR IS THAT

EGYPT'S CRITICS WILL USE FORUM TO AIR WELL KNOWN CRITICISMS OF SINAI II. ANNOUNCEMENT OCT 2 BY KUWAITI MINSTATE HUSAIN THAT KUWAIT WILL OPPOSE RAISING ANY OTHER ISSUE AT MEETING EXCEPT LEBANON WILL GIVE CONSIDERABLE PLEASURE HERE. ACCORDING TO OUR CALCULATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF MEETING SHOULD BE UAE FONMIN SUWAIDI; WHETHER HE WILL BE ABLE KEEP LID ON IS MOOT QUESTION, HOWEVER. PRESS REPORTS THAT ONLY EIGHT OF TWENTY AL MEMBERS HAVE SO FAR ANNOUNCED CONSENT TO HOLDING OF EMERGENCY MEETING, BUT WHO THESE EIGHT ARE HAS NOT BEEN REVEALED.

3. WITH REGARD TO LEBANON, THERE ARE VARIOUS VIEWS AS TO WHAT AL CAN ACHIEVE. GUMHEIRRIYA COLUMNIST WITH GOOD GOE ACCESS SAYS HIS SOUNDINGS SHOW GOE TENDING TOWARD SUPPORTING THREE PROPOSALS: DISPATCH OF AL POLITICAL OBSERVERS TO "JOIN" NATIONAL RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE, SECONDING OF AL MILITARY OBSERVERS TO LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES, AND SCHEME FOR WEALTHY ARAB STATES TO PARTICIPATE IN REBUILDING OF BEIRUT AND OTHER DAMAGED URBAN AREAS. WITH REGARD TO LAST POINT ASSUMPTION IS THAT KUWAITIS AND SAUDIS WILL, AS USUAL, REFUSE TO MAKE CASH PAYMENTS TO CORRUPT LEBANESE POLITICIANS, BUT WILL ENDEAVOR WORK OUT SOME METHOD PAY DIRECTLY FOR NECESSARY GOODS AND EQUIPMENT.

4. COMMENT: EGYPTIANS ARE UNDOUBTEDLY WORRIED ABOUT ARAB LEAGUE MEETING. FRENCH EMBOFF WITH EXCELLENT GOE CONTACTS TELLS US PARTICULAR MFA WORRY IS THAT SYRIANS, KHADDAM IN PARTICULAR, WILL INSIST ON EXPANDING AGENDA TO DISCUSS BOTH SINAI II AND ALSO ROLE OF PALESTINIANS IN PEACE MAKING PROCESS. OBVIOUSLY, LAST THING FAHMY WANTS RIGHT NOW IS CONFRONTATION, SURE TO BE WIDELY PUBLICIZED, WITH EGYPT'S ARAB CRITICS.
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